



The Weekly Wrap Up

March 10, 2006

From Viola Miller, Tennessee's Commissioner for
The Department of Children's Services



Committee on Multicultural Affairs Formed

The Committee on Multicultural Affairs was formed to be the catalyst to prepare DCS to meet the challenge of becoming a culturally competent department. In September 2004 Commissioner Viola P. Miller gave the committee its initial charge, which is to develop a comprehensive cultural competency plan for the department and a training component to be integrated through the pre- and in-service training curriculum.

“As a department we must be prepared to deal with the changing faces of Tennessee, even as we continue to strive to eliminate the racial and cultural barriers that have historically existed in our state,” said William Haynes, the executive director of Human Resource Development.

The committee agreed upon the following Mission Statement:

The mission of the Committee on Multicultural Affairs is to ensure that the Department of Children's Services is an organization that is culturally competent.”

The committee agreed upon defining Cultural Competency as:

“A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that are designed to enable individuals/agencies to respond effectively and with respect to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions while recognizing the differences and protecting and preserving the dignity of all people.”

Brief Synopsis of the Subcommittees

The LEP (Limited English Proficiency) Subcommittee is responsible for selecting a process, policy or procedure for meeting the language needs of persons with Limited English Proficiency.

The Training Subcommittee is responsible for increasing and/or improving the staff and community awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness to the cultural diversity of children, families, and staff through ongoing education and training and the integration of policies and program standards.

The Research Data Subcommittee is responsible for assessment of DCS (staff and department), data collection, evaluating service outcomes of diverse clients and tracking progress towards delivering more applicable services.

The committee is working diligently to see their goals come to fruition. Stay tuned for “A Winning Balance” . . . Coming to a conference room near you!

Vicki Burton

Committee chair

E-A-P SPELLS ‘HELP’

Do you sometimes dread going to work? Is it a chore to maintain a positive attitude when faced with criticism, excessive work demands, frustrations and even boredom? Are you stressed to the max?

Don’t give up. EAP can help. The Employee Assistance Program offers a variety of seminars throughout the year. During March, the emphasis will be on re-energizing yourself. Participants will learn how to act positively in the midst of difficulty by learning to be a navigator instead of a victim.

Check the EAP website at www.state.tn.us/finance/ins/eap/spring.html to find out when this seminar will be in your area and how to register online. Other seminars throughout the year include:

- Chemical Dependency/Substance Abuse
- Change Management
- Communication
- Stress Management
- Workplace Risk Management

If you would like to schedule a seminar at your worksite, please call the State EAP office at 741-1925. Departmental seminars can be scheduled with a minimum of 15 participants.

Sandy Sauceman

WHAT'S UP AT MOUNTAIN VIEW YDC?

Plenty, that's what . . .

BLACK HISTORY MONTH ACTIVITIES

The staff and students at Mountain View YDC celebrated Black History month in February with many scheduled activities that recognized famous and influential African American individuals and groups. Activities for staff and students actually started on January 13, with a "Friends of Mountain View" Volunteer CIC sponsored educational and musical performance on the Buffalo Soldiers by Sparky and Rhonda Rucker (www.sparkyandrhonda.com). During February, we also had two guest speakers, a soul food luncheon for all staff and a highly entertaining educational "Student Wax Museum" coordinated by teachers John Sabetta and Rex Kitts. In it, our students portrayed significant black figures such as Martin Luther King, Ray Charles, the Tuskegee Airman, Malcolm X, the Temptations, and Booker T. Washington.



And last, but certainly not least, the activities concluded on March 2, with the Mountain View Staff Talent Show. Staff entertained all in attendance with their talents--proving that work is not the only thing they can do well!

Staff members participating were:

Jelena Browning -

Getting Ready for the Prom

Deirdre Justice -

Poetry

Gary Morris -

Bill Cosby

Dancing with the Stars –

Deborah Strahler and Becky Wester - Master P and Partner

Storytelling -	Dale Barstow
Singing -	Roxanne Bowen
“Blues” Guitar -	Mike James
Piano and Singing -	James Head
Student Line Move -	Students, teachers, and Case Managers
Line Dance -	Lakita Boyd, Venecia Churchman, Sherry Jones, Debra Merritt, Arnetia Williams, Jessica Davis, Betty Ragland, Jelena Browning, and Deborah Strahler

Thank you to all staff and students who planned and participated in all activities.

ZTAG

What’s ZTAG? It’s not a DCS student clothing identification system, a TN Kids upgrade, or about catching up on your sleep. ZTAG (Zero Tolerance of Assaults and Gangs) is a program at Mountain View designed to address and reduce assaultive, aggressive, or gang related behavior. Students who engage in this type of behavior can be placed in the program by their treatment teams. Basically, ZTAG’s structured program helps students develop more socially appropriate skills when interacting with their peers, as well as staff. Since October 2004, statistics have been kept on the number of reportable assaults at Mountain View. Through the ZTAG program, as well as the efforts of all students and staff, our reportable assaults have spiraled downward -- plummeted, if you will. For February 2006, reportable assaults are at an all-time low of eight. To recognize this accomplishment, all eligible students get to participate in “All You Can Eat” self –serve buffet on March 13 and enjoy a movie in the near future.

Steve Collier

Program Coordinator

MVYDC

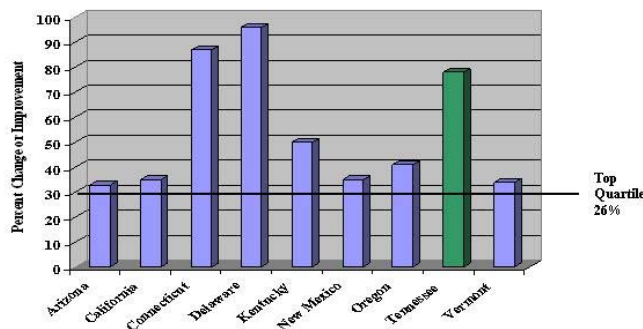
SUSAN MEE SHARES AN ENCOURAGING POWERPOINT

Federal Data Details Tennessee Improvement

The following information was generated by the Administration for the Children and Families (ACF or "The Feds") as a part of its review of states' progress in implementing their Program Improvement Plans, which are a part of the Child and Family Services Review process. As you'll see, the slides highlight Tennessee's progress on four measures (adoption, reunification, placement stability and re-entry) over the last several years. What's shown is our percentage of improvement, not our overall ranking on the measures mentioned. While we've got a long way to go, we are getting better. Let's keep it up!

S.M.

Performance Above National Top Quartile on Adoption Measure for 23 States with PIP Focus on Adoption (Percent Change from FY 2002 to FY 2004)



States with Highest Improvement on Adoption Measure

(Among 23 States with PIP Focus on Adoption)

State	% Improvement	Range
Arizona	33	28.5 - 38.0
California	35	20.9 - 28.3
Connecticut	87	10.6 - 19.9
Delaware	96	14.0 - 27.4
Kentucky	50	14.9 - 22.4
New Mexico	35	32.7 - 44.2
Oregon	41	12.5 - 17.6
Tennessee	78	11.8 - 21.0
Vermont	34	23.0 - 30.8

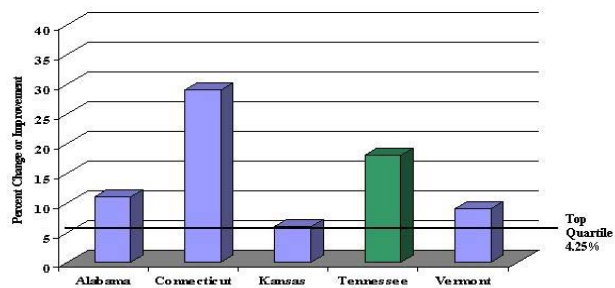
Strategies for Addressing Adoption of Those States Most Improved

- Training for judges and/or courts on TPR and concurrent planning (8 of the 9 States)
- Concurrent planning policy development implementation or training (8 of the 9 States)
- Focus on supervision of permanency planning (8 of the 9 States)
- Use of specialized teams reviewing adoption progress (4 of the 9 States)
- Strengthened capacity of information systems measuring progress to adoption (8 of the 9 States)

Performance Above National Top Quartile on Reunification Measure for 19 States with PIP

Focus on Reunification

(Percent Change from FY 2002 to FY 2004)



States with Highest Improvement on Reunification Measure

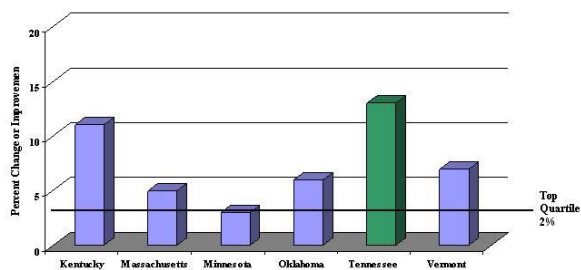
(Among 19 States with PIP Focus on Reunification)

State	% Improvement	Range
Alabama	11	61.4 - 68.0
Connecticut	29	40.5 - 63.0
Kansas	6	42.3 - 45.1
Tennessee	18	64.0 - 76.0
Vermont	9	60.8 - 66.5

Strategies Addressing Reunification of Those States Most Improved

- Strengthen supervision on permanency planning
(2 of the 5 States)
- Concurrent planning (3 of the 5 States)
- Developing data reports to monitor reunification
(3 of the 5 States)
- Enhancing quality of parental visitation (1 of the 5 States)

Performance Above National Top Quartile on Stability Measure for States with PIP Focus on Stability (Percent Change from FY 2002 to FY 2004)



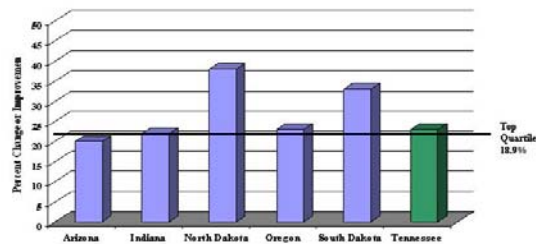
States with Highest Improvement on Placement Stability (Among 22 States with PIP Focus on Placement Stability)

State	% Improvement	Range
Tennessee	13	64.9 - 73.7
Kentucky	11	79.0 - 87.5
Vermont	7	63.9 - 68.5
Oklahoma	6	72.3 - 76.7
Massachusetts	5	75.8 - 79.6
Minnesota	3	87.5 - 89.8

Strategies Addressing Placement Stability for Those States Most Improved

- Build on promising practices from more successful counties (2 of the 6 States)
- Use of foster parent teams or support groups (2 of the 6 States)
- Training on partnerships with foster parents, agency staff and service providers (2 of the 6 States)
- Expanded and targeted Foster Family recruitment (2 of the 6 States)
- Data reports on stability distributed to county level (5 of the 6 States)

Performance Above National Top Quartile on Re-entry Measure for 16 States with PIP Focus on Re-entry (Percent Change from FY 2002 to FY 2004)



**States with Highest Improvement on
Re-entries**

(Among 16 States with PIP Focus on Re-entry)

State	% Improvement	Range
Arizona	20	12.2 - 9.7
Indiana	22	11.6 - 9.0
North Dakota	38	19.5 - 12.1
Oregon	23	10.8 - 8.3
South Dakota	33	19.9 - 13.2
Tennessee	23	11.1 - 8.6

**Strategies Addressing Re-entry
for Those States Most Improved**

- Training on clinical skills and supervision related to discharge planning (3 of the 6 States)
- Policy training on enhancing input from families prior to discharge (3 of the 6 States)
- Examination of data and reasons children re-enter (3 of the 6 States)
- Implement multidisciplinary review prior to reunification (2 of the 6 States)
- Improve access to services post discharge (3 of the 6 States)
- Training on needs of older foster children (3 of the 6 States)